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FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Commissioners on Inland Fisheries,

MADE TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS JANUARY SESSION,
A. D. 1874.

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State of Rhode Island, &c.

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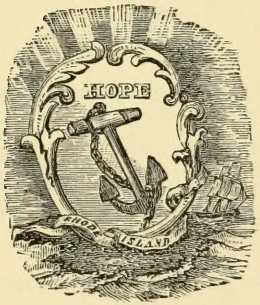

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REPORT.

To the Honorable General Assembly, January Session, 1874:

The Commissioners of Inland Fisheries beg leave to present their fourth annual report:

The year past has, on the whole, been a very satisfactory one in our department. A number of ponds have been stocked with black bass; a farther supply of young shad have been placed in the three principal streams of the State, together with young salmon and trout, the number and location of which is herein specified.

A fishway has been completed over the dam at the mouth of the Pawtuxet, and we are glad to report an increasing interest in the public mind in regard to our labors.

STATE HATCHING ESTABLISHMENT.

Salmon. There were received from Mr. Atkins, of Maine, one hundred thousand salmon eggs as our proportion of the result of his operations the past year, at an expense of $450.

Of this number, we were successful in hatching sixty-six thousand. Twelve thousand five hundred of these were placed in the Slatersville branch of the Blackstone river, at fourteen different points. Sixteen thousand were placed in the north-west branch of the Pawtuxet, from Hopkins' Mills in Foster, to Pontiac, at eighteen different points.

On the south-west branch, from Quidneck pond to River Point, eight thousand were put at sixteen different points.

On the Pawcatuck, commencing north of Kingston station to Carolina Mills, at eight points, and from Carolina Mills up the west branch to Woodville, at four points, were put in twenty-two thousand in good condition.

In our various trips to distribute these fish, we found it better to renew the water from wells than from running streams. The excessive drouth and heat of the early part of the past summer were against us, but we made the transfers of the young fish with a loss of eight thousand, which occurred in one day in stocking the Pawcatuck.

Trout. We placed in the hatching boxes thirty thousand trout spawn, at a cost of $150.00, from Mr. A. F. Collins, Caledonia, Livingston Co., N. Y. With these we had bad luck, only hatching six thousand. The fault seemed to be in the spawn, which, after doing excellently well in the hatching boxes for a time, began to die off from no perceptible cause. We notified Mr. Collins at the time, and he agreed to make the loss good this year, which he has done.

The hatching houses are in excellent order, and, with the experience gained in the past, we hope to record fewer mistakes in the future.

Shad. By permission of Mr. Brackett, Massachusetts Commissioner, and through the courtesy of Dr. Hudson, we were enabled to procure about one hundred and fifty thousand young shad, which we distributed in the three principal streams without loss.

We would state here that Warren river has been, in times past, one of the best if not the best shad stream in this State. A limited number are taken there each year now, but as part of it is under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, we have not thought best to attempt re-stocking it till some joint action of the two States may be taken in regard to it. And we propose conferring with the Massachusetts Commissioners, at an early day, on the subject.

The Petaquamscot or Narrow River, in South Kingstown, is also a stream from which in another year we hope to obtain some results, and a survey of it will be made at once.

We desire in connection with the subject of the distribution of fish in various parts of the State, to return our best thanks to the

Providence and Worcester Railroad Company, the Providence and Stonington Railroad Company, and the Boston and Providence Railroad Company, for accommodations shown us at all times. Their officials have shown themselves interested in our work, and much of our success in transporting fish is due to them.

Black Bass. We have to report the following ponds stocked with black bass the past year:

Yawgoo, in South Kingstown,	24 Fish.
Worden's, in " "	22 "
Bellville, in North Kingstown,	30 "
Johnson's, in Coventry,	26 "
Wickeboxet, in West Greenwich,	34 "
Deep, in Exeter,	50 "
Yawgook, in Hopkinton,	65 "
Eaton's, in Newport,	35 "
Two ponds on Block Island,	39 "

Most of these fish were two years old and upwards, which cost more, and a little more trouble to transport than yearlings, but we gain a year and more in producing qualities, and prevent all chance of the original stock being destroyed by pickerel. We feel the utmost confidence that, in a few years, our inland waters will be well stocked with this excellent game fish, and are particularly well satisfied with this part of our labors.

Mr. Robert Holmes, from whom we have procured most of our bass, has, as heretofore, served us most promptly and faithfully, and we heartily recommend him to any private parties who may desire his services in his line. His address is East Wareham, Mass.

FISHWAYS.

We are happy to be able to report the completion of the fishway over the dam at the mouth of the Pawtuxet. We have waited some time and taken much pains to determine as to the best model for this the first fishway built in Rhode Island, and think we have as well built and practical an apparatus as is in the United States. It is built after plans by Mr. Brackett, the Massachusetts State Commissioner, and combines the latest improvements up to date.

The city of Providence, who own the dam, agreed to pay $500 towards the building of this fishway, the State subscribing a like amount, which, by our estimates, was considered about what it would cost; but the water commissioners, under whose superintendence the city considered it proper it should be built, suggested certain additions as to more thorough bracing and strengthening, which, with additional labor and delay, caused the estimates to overrun something over five hundred dollars. Of this sum the city have agreed to pay one-half, and we respectfully request your honorable body to appropriate the sum of $260.66, the same being one-half the excess and the amount now due.

Immense strength was necessary to guard against ice, and we flatter ourselves this is secured, and we hope those of the community who are interested, and particularly dam owners, will visit the fishway this spring and examine for themselves. The Commissioners will be at all times ready to give any information in their power. The builders were Messrs. French & McKenzie, of Providence.

At this writing, we have received information from Mr. Atkins, of Bucksport, Maine, under whose superintendence the collecting of salmon ova the past season has been most successfully carried out, that our share is now ready for us, amounting to one hundred and twenty-six thousand; and from Professor Baird, United States Commissioner, we are informed that the allotment for this State is seventy-five thousand, also now ready, so that we shall soon have in hatching house some two hundred thousand salmon eggs.

CLOSE TIME.

We desire to call the attention of your honorable body to the importance of establishing wholesome restrictions against indiscriminate fishing in our streams when the proper time comes.

We will, to the best of our ability, recommend such laws as the other New England States have found to the best advantage, which is all we can do.

APPROPRIATION.

We suggest that the sum of $1,500.00 be appropriated to meet the expenses of the year 1874.

The following, "An act in amendment of and in addition to Chapter 137, Title XVIII, of the General Statutes, 'Of Inland Fisheries,'" was passed March 11, 1873:

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. No person shall take or catch fish of any kind from any of the inland waters of this State, set apart by the commissioners of inland fisheries thereof for the cultivation of fish, except at such times and in such manner as is hereinafter enacted.

SEC. 2. Section 7 of said chapter 137 of the General Statutes of this State is so far amended as to allow the catching of fish through the ice only, and with hook and line only in those ponds set apart for the cultivation of black bass during the months of December, January and February, of each and every year from the passage of this act until the expiration of three years mentioned in section 7 of said chapter.

SEC. 3. After the expiration of said three years, no person shall catch or take fish of any kind from any pond legally set apart by said commissioners for the cultivation of black bass during the months of March, April and May, and only by hook and line as aforesaid.

SEC. 4. After the expiration of three years, no fish shall be taken by any persons from any waters legally set apart by said commissioners for the cultivation of shad and salmon, or within one mile of the outlet of the streams so set apart except from and after the fifteenth day of April until the fifteenth day of July of each and every year, nor at any time except by hook and hand line, or by not less than three inch mesh nets or seine or seines.

SEC. 5. No person shall take any fish from any of the waters of this State, legally set apart for the cultivation of fish, during the times allowed to be taken by this act, except on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, during said term, except the months of December, January and February.

SEC. 6. Nothing in this act shall prevent the Commissioners of Inland Fisheries from taking fish from any of said waters as is now prevented by section 5, chapter 137, of the General Statutes.

SEC. 7. Any person violating any of the provisions of this act shall be subject to the penalties for catching fish as imposed by section 5 of said chapter 137, of which this act is an amendment.

SEC. 8. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

SEC. 9. This act shall take effect immediately on and after its passage.

The following is a list of the Commissioners of Inland Fisheries thus far appointed:

Hon. Spencer F. Baird, Smithsonian Institute, - Washington, D. C.

MAINE.

E. M. Stilwell, - - - - Bangor.
Henry O. Stanley, - - - - Dixfield.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Thomas E. Hatch,	Keene.
William W. Fletcher,	Concord.
W. A. Sanborn,	Weirs.

VERMONT.

M. C. Edmonds,	Weston.
M. Goldsmith,	Rutland.

MASSACHUSETTS.

Theodore Lyman,	Brookline.
E. A. Brackett,	Winchester.
Thomas Talbot,	North Billerica.

CONNECTICUT.

William M. Hudson,	Hartford.
Robert G. Pike,	Middletown.
James A. Bill,	Lyme.

RHODE ISLAND.

John H. Barden,	Scituate.
Alfred A. Reed, Jr.,	Providence.
Newton Dexter,	Providence.

NEW YORK.

Horatio Seymour,	Utica.
George G. Cooper,	New York City.
Robert B. Roosevelt,	New York City.

NEW JERSEY.

R. P. Howell,	Bloomsbury.
J. H. Slack,	Bloomsbury.

PENNSYLVANIA.

James Worral,	Harrisburg.

VIRGINIA.

William B. Ball,	Mid Lothain.
Asa Hall,	Winchester.

ALABAMA.

Charles S. G. Doster,	Montgomery.
R. Tyler,	Montgomery.
D. R. Hundley,	Courtland.

CALIFORNIA.

B. B. Redding,	Sacramento.
S. R. Throckmorton,	San Francisco.
J. D. Farwell,	San Francisco.

MICHIGAN.

Gov. J. J. Bagley,	Detroit.
George H. Jerome,	Niles.
George Clark,	Ecorse.

FINANCES.

1873. *State of Rhode Island in account with Commissioners on Inland Fisheries.*

DR.

To labor and lumber for hatching house,	$262 15
To amount paid Charles G. Atkins, for salmon spawn,	400 00
" " for stocking Pawcatuck river with salmon,	10 20
" " " express and telegrams on salmon,	3 34
" " " freight on salmon,	1 25
" " R. Holmes, for salmon spawn from Maine,	48 20
" " for trout ova, 60,000,	409 34
" " " black bass, and expense of stocking the following ponds with 284 black bass, viz.: Yawgoo, Worden's, Bellville, Johnson, Newport, Wickeboxet, and Block Island,	826 71
" " " stocking with shad the following rivers, viz.: Blackstone, Pawtuxet and Pawcatuck rivers,	60 29
" " " rent of land, 1 year,	13 00
" " John Howe, for surveying Pawtuxet dam, etc.,	58 80
" " officers for watching ponds,	40 00
" " for printing, stationery, and postage,	8 12
" " " travelling expenses,	156 30
	$2,297 70
To balance carried forward,	462 40
	$2,760 10

CR.

1873. February 24.	By balance on hand Feb. 24, 1873,	$1,260 10	
	" appropriation by State for 1873,	1,500 00	
			$2,760 10
1874. February 19.	By balance on hand,		$462 40

RECAPITULATION.

Hatching house,	$262 15
Salmon,	462 99
Trout,	409 34
Black Bass,	826 71
Shad,	60 29
Travelling expenses,	156 30
Sundries,	119 92
	$2,297 70

This statement shows that the Commissioners have $462.40 on hand over and above the expenses of the year 1873.

JOHN H. BARDEN,
NEWTON DEXTER,
ALFRED A. REED, Jr.,
} Commissioners on Inland Fisheries.

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